A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE MISSION ESTABLISHED AMONG THE ESQUIMAUX INDIANS ON THE COAST OF LABRADOR, ETC.

BY

(BENJAMIN LATROBE)

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OR

UNITAS FRATRUM,

LONDON:

Printed by M. Lewis, No. 1. Pater-noſter-Row, for the Brethren's Society for the Furtherance of the Goſpel: and ſold by M. Lewis, and at all the Brethren's Chapels:

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THE Eſquimaux, who are the inhabitants of the coaſt of Labrador, from the 55th to the 60th degree Northern latitude, have been hitherto known under no other character than that of a thieviſh, treacherous, and murderous race of ſavages. But after the Brethren had made ſeveral voyages to that coaſt, with a view to get acquainted with this nation, and were thereby certified, that the Eſquimaux had the ſame language with the Greenlanders, only ſomewhat differing in the dialect, as has been already related in the *Succinct View of the Miſſions eſtabliſhed among the Heathen by the Church of the Brethren*, page 23—27; and it appearing that they were in all probability the ſame nation originally, it was reſolved to eſtabliſh a miſſion-ſettlement among them.

Many Brethren offered themſelves to enter upon this arduous undertaking, though they were, in no wiſe, ignorant of the dangers attending it. Out of theſe, three married pairs, one widower, and ſeven

ſingle Brethren were fixed upon to begin this ſettlement. They were,

Jens Haven, who was the firſt brother that went in ſearch of the Eſquimaux. He felt, even before he went to Greenland, an impulſe to carry to this ſavage nation the goſpel of their redemption, and undiſmayed by the many difficulties and dangers which he had met with, and might ſtill have to encounter, he went with his wife in this company.

Chriſtian Laerſen Drachart, an old Miſſionary, who is frequently mentioned in *Crantz's Hiſtory of Greenland*, having ſerved the Lord twelve years among the Greenlanders, waited, as a widower, many years with earneſt deſire, that the door might be opened to the Eſquimaux, and that he might end his days in the miniſtry of the Goſpel among them. He accordingly ſailed with the reſt, the third time, to Labrador.

Chriſtopher Braaſen, a phyſician and ſurgeon, who was ſtirred up on his viſit in Greenland to devote himſelf to the ſervice of the Lord among theſe ſavages, went thither with his wife.

John Schneider, born in Moravia, who had been alſo ſeveral years an aſſiſtant in the Miſſion in Greenland, but afterwards waited a conſiderable time in America till the door ſhould be opened to the Eſquimaux. He at length obtained his wiſh to go with his wife to Labrador.

Joſeph

Joſeph Neuſſer, who had alſo been ſeveral years an aſſiſtant in the Miſſion in Greenland, and

Stephen Jenſon, who was appointed to have the care of the externals in this Miſſion;

And five other aſſiſtants, all Single Brethren, were choſen to enter upon this undertaking.

Theſe came altogether from their different habitations hither, to Lindſey-houſe in Chelſea; and their ſimplicity, deliberate zeal, and devotedneſs of heart, was an edification to all thoſe who converſed with them.

At the requeſt of the Deputation of the Miſſions*, the Brethren's Society for the Furtherance of the Goſpel among the Heathen§, undertook to fit out and eſtabliſh this Miſſion with a zeal and heartineſs which muſt render them truly reſpectable; for although it was evident to themſelves, that it would be beyond the ability of their little company (with that which the Deputation, who have ſo many Miſſions to provide for, could contribute towards the expences) to raiſe the ſums neceſſary for ſuch a great undertaking; yet they truſted in the Lord, *to whom there is no reſtraint to* execute his will *by many or by few*, that he would ſtir up not only our brethren and ſiſters, but alſo the

* Thoſe Brethren choſen at the ſynod, to have the general care of the external affairs of all the miſſions, are called the Deputation of the Miſſions.

§ This ſociety is eſtabliſhed in London,

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lovers of the kingdom of Jesus and the friends of mankind to assist them, and their hopes have not been put to shame.

As it was needful, that the Missionaries should be provided with all necessaries of every kind, therefore a house was framed here, that so it might be erected upon their arrival, and made habitable before the ship left the coast. Bricks, mortar, boards, shingles, cast iron stoves, and all necessary furniture, was procured for them, partly here, and partly in Newfoundland. And as they had but very little hopes of procuring their maintenance by hunting and fishing, therefore a quantity of suitable provisions for a year at least, and cloaths proper for that inhospitable climate, were sent with them. Though what was provided was but scanty, yet they received it with great thankfulness, and their joy in the hopes of being a blessing to the Esquimaux made them superior to all the difficulties and inconveniences.

Government shewed a kind attention to their safety, and Mr. Byron, who succeeded Sir Hugh Palliser, in the government of Newfoundland and Labrador, was so good as to issue a proclamation, forbidding every one to molest the Brethren in their settlement, or to male-treat the poor Esquimaux in any wise.

The owners, who had resolved to purchase a ship merely for the sake of this Mission, had, in the foregoing years, sustained a considerable loss, yet they determined

to

to purchaſe a larger ſhip for the carrying the Brethren to Labrador, they being paid by the Brethren's Society for the Furtherance of the Goſpel, for the freight of the paſſengers and their goods.

Every thing being prepared for the voyage, they were, at a ſolemn meeting in the Brethren's Chapel in Fetter-lane, London, on the 5th of May, 1771, recommended, in a fervent and affecting prayer, to the gracious protection and keeping of our Father in heaven, to the grace and preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to the kind guidance of the Holy Ghoſt; and on the 8th of the ſame month they went on board the ſhip Amity, with confident and joyful hearts, and arrived, after a tedious and troubleſome voyage, at St. John's in Newfoundland, on the firſt of July.

They met here with much kindneſs from ſome of the inhabitants; and having ſoon compleated their ſtores, ſailed on the 7th for Labrador.

This laſt part of their voyage was ſtill more difficult and dangerous. They were often obliged, on account of ſtorms, to run into bays between numberleſs iſlands and ſunken rocks, with which this coaſt abounds. They were often environed with great mountains of ice and ice-fields, which were terrible to the very mariners: but the Lord helped them out of all the dangers with which they were encompaſſed, and gave them the joy to ſee, meet and ſpeak, at ſundry times, with ſome of the Eſquimaux. As ſoon as the Indians heard that

they

they were Brethren who would dwell among them, and that Jens Ingoak (little Jens, ſo they called Brother Haven) was there, they expreſſed much joy, and were very ready to ſerve them, by giving them directions how to find the harbour which they had choſen the foregoing year. They caſt anchor in the deſired haven on the 9th of Auguſt. And their firſt buſineſs was to return thanks and praiſes to the Lord, whoſe help they had ſo often experienced.

They went on ſhore the next day, being the 10th of Auguſt, to take a nearer view of the ground, and to fix upon the ſpot on which they would erect their houſe. One of the texts † appointed for that day in all the Brethren's Congregations was particularly impreſſive and encouraging. It was,

"Thou ſhalt bring them in, and plant them in the "mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O "Lord, which thou haſt made for thee to dwell in, in "the ſanctuary which thine hands have eſtabliſhed," Exod. xv. 16. To which was added the collect,

"We ſurely are a work of thine own hand,
"Thy ſouls, on whom thou'ſt deign'd thy blood to
"ſpend,
"By thy holy Spirit to thee directed,
"A cov'nant people, by free grace, elected
"To endleſs bliſs."

† There are two texts appointed for each day throughout the year, which are uſed in all the Brethren's Congregations; and a ſhort collect, being generally ſome lines of a hymn, is ſubjoined.

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They immediately ſet about erecting their houſe, incloſed it with paliſades, and were ſo far ready, on the 22d of September, that they could enter into it and lodge in two rooms; and the worthy Captain, who had, with his crew, given them all poſſible aſſiſtance, could ſet ſail for England on the 24th of September.

The place which the Brethren have choſen for their habitation upon the main land, is ſo ſituated, that both the *Nunenguak** Tribe, who dwell on the iſlands between them and the open ſea, and the other Eſquimaux, who uſually go from the South to the North and back again, paſs by it; and thus they have an opportunity to hear the Goſpel there.

Brother Drachart began directly to preach the Goſpel of reconciliation to the Savages, while the reſt of the Brethren were employed in building: Their ſituation was critical, it was, as one of them writes, as if each *with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held a weapon*; for it was neceſſary for them to uſe all precaution, and to be conſtantly upon their guard againſt the attempts of a nation, to whom ſtealing and murdering were become, through habit, a ſecond nature. But, praiſed be God, who preſerved them with ſuch a powerful arm, and who turned the hearts of the Eſquimaux to ſuch friendſhip towards the Brethren, that there was no occaſion to make uſe of any kind of weapons againſt them. The Brethren ſoon diſcovered a very conſiderable difference between the conduct of theſe ſavages now, and when they firſt ſaw them. For-

* They are called *Nunenguaks*, becauſe the diſtrict in which they live is called *Nunenguak*.

merly, they were bold and impudent, and looked upon the Europeans as upon dogs, giving them the appellation, *Kablunets*, that is, Barbarians, but called themſelves *Innuit*, which ſignifies Men. Now, they expreſſed their deſire to hear the good news, and ſhewed, of their own accord, that they had no ſecret murdering knives concealed in their ſleeves, or under their jackets, nor bows and arrows, nor darts hid in their kajaks *. They began to prove by facts, that their uſual addreſs to the Brethren, when they firſt met them, *Ikingutegekpogut*, (we are friends) was truth, and flowed from their hearts. The Brethren therefore conclude the journal which they ſent to Europe with theſe words, "We "have reaſon to thank our Lord for preſerving us hi-"therto beyond all our expectation, and all our Bre-"thren and Siſters and friends, who hear this, will "praiſe the Lord with us."

The owners reſolved to ſend the ſhip again in the Spring of 1772; but as their former loſs was conſiderably encreaſed by the laſt voyage, they determined to ſend her to fiſh upon the banks of Newfoundland, before ſhe ſailed to Labrador with the proviſions ſent for the Brethren's uſe this year.

The ſhip ſtaid longer out than was expected, and did not return to London until December. This delay gave us much concern, and we were not without pain-

‡ A *Kajack* is a ſmall boat, ſharp at both ends, the ribs are made of wood; theſe are covered altogether with Seal ſkin, in the middle is a hole, into which the man thruſts his legs, and the lower part of his body, and ſits with his legs extended. Theſe boats hold but one man, who makes uſe of a paddle, and can get very ſpeedily forward.

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ful apprehenſions; but our good brethren in Nain § had reaſon to have more frightful and anxious thoughts on account of the ſhip's remaining ſo long abſent from them.

After the departure of the ſhip in the foregoing year, they had enough to do to finiſh their houſe, and to ſecure themſelves againſt the cold, which is much more intenſe there than in Greenland, although their houſe is almoſt ſeven degrees more to the South than our ſettlement in that country ‖. The ice does not thaw, ſo as to clear the harbour, till towards the end of June.

Though they did all in their power to obtain freſh proviſions by hunting, fowling, and fiſhing, yet they got but a very ſmall quantity, having ſhot but two Reindeers, and about an hundred Ruypers, a bird a little bigger than a patridge. This was certainly but a ſmall pittance for ſuch a large family.

As the ſhip, after having concluded the fiſhing on the Banks, had a very ſlow paſſage to Labrador by reaſon of contrary winds and much ice, and did not reach Unity-Harbour until the end of October, the Brethren began to give up all hopes of her arrival, and of their getting any proviſions this year. They had but two

§ They called their houſe Nain, and the harbour before the houſe, Unity-Harbour.

‖ The reaſon of this is, that the N. W. wind, which is the ſevereſt, comes over an arm of the ſea to our ſettlement in Greenland, by which means the cold is leſſened; whereas this ſevere wind, which blows the greateſt part of the winter in Labrador, comes to Nain over an immenſe frozen continent.

pieces of fleſh meat left, and very little of other proviſions, and had the diſmal proſpect of ſtarving for want of the neceſſaries of life. They therefore ſought out and gathered all the red and black berries under the hills, dried them, and laid them carefully by. From the Eſquimaux they could expect little or no aſſiſtance, notwithſtanding the good will ſeveral of them teſtified; for theſe poor improvident ſavages ſuffer often themſelves ſo great want, that ſome, almoſt every year, die through hunger †.

Thus ſituated, their diſtreſs was turned into the greater joy, when the ſhip at laſt, contrary to their expectations, appeared in Unity-Harbour on the 28th of October.* In their letters they expreſs themſelves on this occaſion thus:

" Had you ſeen the joy that reigned among us, " when we heard that the ſhip was arrived, you would " certainly never forget it; for we had given her up, " and had devoted ourſelves to the moſt extreme degree " of poverty. I cannot ſay that a dejected ſpirit ruled " among us before; but we were reſolved to ſurren- " der ourſelves up to all circumſtances, hoping and " truſting that He who has ſent us hither, who has " counted our hairs, and without whoſe permiſſion " none of them could fall to the ground, would pre- " ſerve us."——In another letter it is remarked:

† The ſavages had been in ſuch want the foregoing winter, that they were obliged to dig up ice eight feet thick on the ſtrand, to get muſcles and ſea weeds to ſtay their hunger and preſerve life.

* With the ſhip their number was encreaſed by a brother who went to Labrador to dwell with them.

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" The ſhip's ſtaying away ſo long had two effects;
" firſt, It convinced us that nothing was impoſſible to
" the Lord, and that he can command the ſeas that
" they ſhould remain open, that, though ſo late in the
" year, the ſhip could come hither. Secondly, It made
" us more thankful for the proviſion ſent to us."

Touching the main object of their ſettlement, one of them writes as follows:

" The word of the croſs, and of the great atoning
" Sacrifice, has been, at every opportunity, yea with-
" out ceſſation, preached by us unto the Eſquimaux.
" Brother Drachart has particularly ſhewn great
" faithfulneſs herein; for he ſcarcely ever ſpeaks with
" them of any thing elſe. They hear it, and for the
" greateſt part wonder at it. Sometimes they will not
" hear, go away from him, and begin to laugh; but
" he is ſtill patient, and goes on in hope. We diſ-
" cover however joyful traces in ſome, that the word
" of the croſs, which can even melt rocks, does not
" return without leaving ſome effects on one or ano-
" ther of them. May our Saviour grant that it may
" ſoon take deep root in their hearts!"

Notwithſtanding the exceſſive cold in winter, ſome of the miſſionaries ventured to go over the ice and ſnow on a viſit, and to preach the goſpel to the Eſquimaux in their winter houſes, which are built of pieces of ſnow †. The miſſionaries were not only received and lodged

§ The manner of forming theſe houſes is this: they chuſe a large drift of ſnow, dig an oval hole in it as large as they want the houſe. They then cut

lodged in a very friendly manner by the Eſquimaux, but they were conſtantly viſited by numbers of them as ſoon as they could drive from their habitations on the iſlands, to the Brethren's dwelling, over the frozen ſea, on ſledges drawn by dogs ‡. And as ſoon as the ice was gone, the viſits were ſtill more numerous §.

The confidence of the ſavages to the Brethren, had increaſed in ſuch a manner, that they aſked their advice in all their circumſtances. A particular inſtance of *their confidence* and attention to the Brethren had occurred this year. There aroſe ſuch a quarrel between ſome of the Eſquimaux of *Nunenguak* and *Arbartok*, that the latter threatened to murder the former. Thoſe of *Nunenguak* therefore fled to the Brethren, and deſired their protection. The Brethren would not

cut out pieces of ſnow of three feet long, two feet broad, and one foot thick; with theſe they arch over this hole. Inſtead of a window, they cut a hole in the arch, and fix in a ſlab of ice, which gives tolerable light. They dig a long crooked low entry through the ſnow to the dwelling, and uſe a ſlab of frozen ſnow for the door. They leave an elevation of about twenty inches high in the midſt of the houſe, on which they lay ſkins and ſleep.

‡ Theſe ſledges are ſometimes drawn by fourteen, by twenty, yea, they have ſeen twenty-eight dogs before ſuch a ſledge. They run all abreaſt. Their harneſs is all bound together to a thick thong, which, paſſing thro' a ſtrong ring, is faſtened to the ſledge. The driver alſo binds all the reins together; his whip has a handle of about ten inches or a foot long, but the laſh is from twenty to twenty-four feet in length, and he can govern his dogs tolerably expertly. Theſe poor dogs are all half ſtarved; they frequently eat their harneſs, and are then beaten moſt unmercifully.

§ The Eſquimaux can go much more conveniently from place to place in their Kajaks and women's boats, when the water is open, than on their ſledges over the ice, and are not ſo much expoſed to the cold. This is the reaſon of the viſits being more numerous in ſummer than in winter.

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diſappoint their good confidence, but promiſed to protect them, upon condition that they would concur with them in endeavouring to make peace between them and their enemies. Not long after, one of their enemies, who was reſolved upon murder, came alſo upon the Brethren's land. By the deſire of theſe Eſquimaux, who complained of this man, and who were ten in number, among whom was *Tugluina*, the huſband of the well-known woman *Mikak*, and his brother *Seguliak*, a meeting was appointed between him and them, in the preſence of the Brethren. The ten accuſers, one after the other, delivered their teſtimonies againſt the accuſed, and he defended himſelf as well as he could; but they puſhed him ſo hard, that at length he began to weep. Then Brother Drachart began to ſhew unto them, that God would, by this opportunity, convince them of their wretched condition, and bring them into another and happier way of thinking. He aſked the accuſed, whether he was ſorry for his wicked murdering thoughts and intentions? whether he would lay them aſide, and would for the future love his countrymen as his brethren? and ſome more ſuch queſtions. As he anſwered all theſe queſtions in the affirmative, and not without emotion, he then addreſſed the accuſers, and aſked them whether they would forgive him, and, forgetting all that had paſſed, make peace, and would alſo for the future love him as their countryman? Nine of them expreſſed their readineſs to forgive him, but one would not give an anſwer. Brother Drachart took this man aſide into his chamber, and aſked him why he would not forgive? At firſt he replied, that he did not believe that the accuſed meant

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honeſtly what he ſpoke with his lips. Drachart repreſented unto him, that God could change the hearts; that he himſelf had ſuch a bad heart that God muſt change it, why then would he not forgive his countryman? Through this converſation he became ſo tender, that he declared his willingneſs to lay aſide all enmity. He went back into the aſſembly with Drachart, and publicly declared his readineſs to forgive. Thus peace was not only eſtabliſhed among them, but the Eſquimaux reſolved among themſelves, that when any differences ſhould for the future ariſe, or evil reports be ſpread of each other, they would go directly to the Brethren, beg to have ſuch another meeting, and make up their differences amicably. Thus the Lord approved his ſervants to the ſavages as peace-makers, and thereby ſtrengthened their faith, that he would, in his good time, open their hearts and ears that they may become obedient to the faith.

With this hope, and with an emboldened mind, they concluded the firſt year of their abode among theſe ſavages; and by the accounts received of their preſervation and chearful perſeverance in the work of the Lord, the Congregations of the Brethren were filled with praiſe and thankſgiving *.

But with a view to come more to the aſſiſtance of the miſſion by council and deed, both in their inter-

* We cannot help mentioning, that Siſter Haven was delivered of a ſon, who was baptized in the Eſquimaux language, in the preſence of the Eſquimaux, and called John-Benjamin. The Eſquimaux are exceeding fond of this child.——Another Siſter was delivered, but the child was ſtill-born.

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nal and external affairs, the Brethren, to whom the ſynod has committed the general care of all the Brethren's miſſions, reſolved to ſend one of their number upon a viſitation to Labrador in the ſpring, 1773. The Rev. Paul Eugenius Layritz was choſen for this purpoſe; and notwithſtanding, his age, being ſixty-ſix years old, he declared with chearfulneſs his readineſs to undertake this difficult and dangerous voyage. His wife alſo determined to go with him, to be a comfort and pleaſure to the three ſiſters in Nain.

They arrived in Lindſey-houſe, Chelſea, on the 5th of May laſt year, and were reſolved to go with the ſhip to Newfoundland, and either to ſtay on board while ſhe was fiſhing, or to wait in St. John's until the ſhip ſhould return from the banks, and then to embark for Labrador. The Owners of the ſhip were again loſers, and therefore under the neceſſity of making an addition of fifty pounds to every hundred of the original ſtock, to enable them to fit out the ſhip for the next voyage. However, they ventured to reſolve upon the purchaſe of a ſmall veſſel in Newfoundland, which ſhould carry Brother and Siſter Layritz, and Brother John Ludwig Beck, to Labrador as ſoon as the ice would permit.

Brother Beck is the eldeſt ſon of John Beck the oldeſt Miſſionary in Greenland. He was born in Greenland, but was educated from his ſeventh year in Germany; and ſome years ago was ſent back to be thoroughly inſtructed in the Greenland language by his father, and thus be qualified to be employed in the miſſion among the Eſquimaux.

They arrived safe and well in the harbour of St. John's on May the 5th, and much kindness was shewn to them by Mr. White, Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court, to whom the worthy Governor Schuldam had recommended Mr. Layritz, as also by Justice Gill and Mr. Gadden.

After Capt. Mugford and Brother John Hill had purchased and fitted out a small sloop, Brother Layritz and his company embarked, on the 22d of May, on board this little sloop, from twenty-five to thirty tons burthen, called the George, commanded by Mr. Wilson, and sailed for Labrador: but after sailing three days, they were stopt by a field of ice, which extended beyond the bounds of their sight, and were obliged to run with contrary wind, and in a storm, into the bay Notre-Dame. Eight days after, they ventured, in company with another sloop from Fogo, to sail through the broken pieces of ice, but were under the necessity of returning to the bay, and got back to their former place with great danger. At length they set forward on their voyage, sailing slowly along the coast; and on the 24th of June they made the Southern coast of Labrador, and the next day got sight of the first Esquimaux in eight Kajaks. These, upon being called to, in the manner and words usual in Greenland, soon came on board, behaved friendly, and were very attentive while some Greenland verses were sung, concerning the redemption by our Saviour. They invited the Brethren to visit them on Camp Island, where they had pitched their tents. The sloop accordingly sailed thither; and although these Esquimaux, who dwell to the South,

South, and are called Arbartoks, are of the worſt kind, yet they received their viſit in a very friendly manner, and about fifty old and young Indians heard the goſpel, which Brother Layritz preached to them in their five tents, and Brother Beck interpreted; they liſtened with eager attention, and promiſed to viſit the Brethren in Nain, and to hear more of theſe good words. Some days after, ſome of their countrymen, about two hundred in number, in ſix ſhallops, met the little ſloop on the coaſt, ſurrounded her and behaved ſo peaceably, that they did not look like the former thieving and murdering Eſquimaux. They all knew of the Brethren in Nain, and ſome related that they had ſlept there laſt winter, and that they had heard there, from Brother Drachart, the very ſame good words which Brother Layritz now told them.

At length they reached the latitude of Nain, after having eſcaped many dangers, and particularly one on the 15th of July, when they run upon a ſhoal, and were obliged to unload the veſſel upon an iſland that lay near them, and thus, through the grace of God, they got off without damage. Here they were at a loſs, not knowing how to ſteer ſafely through the iſlands and rocks which extend far into the ſea before Unity-Harbour, but they got ſight of an Eſquimaux woman's boat*; the owner of which offered to pilot

* What they call a woman's boat, is a large boat, the ribs of which are made of wood, but the whole is covered with Seal ſkin. One of theſe boats will hold a whole family, with their utenſils, and a great number of dogs. They are always rowed by the women, and therefore called women's boats.

them through Byron's road to Nain. Thus they arrived ſafe and well in Unity-Harbour on July 25th, and were received with the greater joy, which the Brethren and Siſters expreſſed by floods of tears, as their viſit was quite unexpected, and particularly becauſe a Siſter was come to them. The very Eſquimaux, who to the number of two hundred had pitched twenty-one tents on the ſtrand, were full of joy. Eighteen Kajaks came to meet the ſloop as ſhe run into the harbour, and were hung to the ſloop on the right and on the left, and the Eſquimaux came on board to welcome the viſitors. When they landed, theywere ſurrounded by two hundred young and old, and eſcorted by them to the houſe of the Miſſionaries with every token of joy.

At the numerous viſits of the Eſquimaux, of whom thirty-ſix tents* full had been there at once in the beginning of July, the Miſſionaries were uſed to viſit them every morning in their tents, and to enquire, whether they had kept what they had heard in an honeſt and good heart? Towards evening they had always a meeting with the Eſquimaux, to which they were called by the ſound of a bell. In theſe meetings, firſt a verſe out of the Greenland Hymn Book, was given out and ſung, which many of them retain, both as to the words and tune, ſo that they can join very well in ſinging them. After this the goſpel was preached to them in a conciſe manner. Sometimes they were

* A tent is ſo ſpacious that it can contain a family of ſix, eight, ten, and ſometimes more, with all their utenſils.

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aſked, whether they underſtood what they had heard? and upon their deſiring it, it was farther explained to them. The Eſquimaux themſelves often aſked for a more particular explanation. In the firſt meeting, at which Brother Layritz was preſent, he delivered a ſhort diſcourſe which Brother Drachart interpreted: Then one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed heads of a family* ſtood up, and anſwered in the name of the reſt, that they were not only very thankful to the Brethren that they came unto them, dwelt among them, and told them ſuch good words, but he added, "we will give our hearts to the Saviour," whom they call Anaurſirſok §, "we will believe in, and love him."

They alſo declared the ſame, ſome days after, in the preſence of Lieutenant Curtis, who had been ſent by the Governor in a king's ſchooner, to ſee how the Brethren went on, and at the ſame time to ſurvey the coaſt.

Upon this occaſion, about thirty of the heads of families were aſſembled. Mr. Curtis deſired Brother Drachart to inform them, that his Excellency the Governor had given orders to acquaint them, that they muſt leave off ſtealing and murdering; for who-

* There are no national chiefs or heads either among the Greenlanders or Eſquimaux. They all are equals, though ſome Angekoks, who are cunning, and have bodily ſtrength, have ſome influence upon their countrymen, but not as chief or head. The head of a family has naturally an authority over his family.

§ This word ſignifies, He that ſaves or delivers from dreadful misfortunes.

ſoever

ſoever ſhould be found guilty of theſe crimes, for the future, muſt be puniſhed with death. Further, they ſhould go no more to the South under pretence of getting wood for their bows and arrows; but if they were under a neceſſity to go thither, they ſhould not do it without taking with them a certificate from the Brethren. Hereupon they replied, It is right that a thief and murderer be puniſhed with death, for he deſerves it; but ſince they had heard the goſpel of Jeſus, they had no more ſtolen or murdered, and they would, for the future, do ſo no more. They had not been at the South theſe three years, ſince they (the Nunenguaks) had heard the Governor's proclamation; and if any of them ſhould be obliged to go to the South, they would bring a letter from their Brethren.† Mr. Curtis aſſured them of the love of the King and of the Governor, and they expreſſed their thankfulneſs in a very hearty and friendly manner.

This teſtimony muſt, agreeable to the truth, be given to them, that they become from time to time more attached to, and more confident towards the Brethren. When they go from Nain to the iſlands or the ſea, they commit the goods they moſt value to the Brethren to keep for them; yea, they often leave their wives and children under the inſpection and care of the Brethren until they return. On this account the Brethren reſolved to build a ſtore houſe for them, in which they can lay up ſuch proviſions as they can procure and ſpare in ſummer, that ſo they may be able to dwell with the Miſſionaries in winter, and to hear the word of God daily and richly.

† By "their Brethren," they meant the miſſionaries.

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It cannot be ſaid as yet with certainty that they are converted, and therefore the Miſſionaries will not baptize any, till they find ſouls who are truly awakened by the Holy Ghoſt, and are indeed earneſtly concerned and deſirous to obtain grace through the redemption by the blood of Chriſt. It muſt however be owned, that the preaching of the goſpel unto them has not been in vain. The greateſt part of thoſe who dwell around the Miſſionaries, are often much affected at what they hear of the Saviour of ſinners, and have a reſpect and awe for the name of Jeſus. But it is very hard to convince them of their ſinfulneſs and corruption; for altho' they were formerly the moſt abject ſlaves of their brutal paſſions, and committed all manner of fleſhly ſins, theft and murder, yet they know how to excuſe themſelves with all kind of ſubterfuges as well as the Europeans: The liars comfort themſelves and make uſe of the plea, that they are no thieves; the thieves that they are no murderers; and the murderers that they are not as bad as the Kablunet. And although they have ſome notion that there is a great Lord, who created heaven and earth, yet they have no kind of divine worſhip among them, or any way of paying devotion to this Creator. They ſeem to be alſo without any ſenſe of condemnation, and are always very expert at ſtifling remorſe of conſcience. But ſince they have heard the goſpel, they begin to ſee and acknowledge the heinouſneſs of ſin, alſo to confeſs that they are ſinners, and many feel the neceſſity of having a Saviour. The divine efficacy of the goſpel has approved itſelf unto them. The example of the Miſſionaries and their aſſiſtants, and their walk conformable to the goſpel, is

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a confirmation of what is preached unto them, and attended with the pleasing effect, that the Esquimaux instead of being, as formerly, like a herd of wild boars of the forest, appear now, as Brother Drachart expresses it, "like a flock of sheep round about the Brethren."

Formerly, no European would have ventured himself alone with the Esquimaux, or to have spent a night with them, on any consideration: but now the Missionaries visit them in their winter habitations at a considerable distance from Nain, sleep among them many nights successively, preach there the gospel to them, reprove them on account of their heathenish customs, and even stop the mouths of their *Angekoks*, or pretended conjurers, ordering them to be silent in the midst of their incantations. Nothing can be said to all this, but, *This is the Lord's doing!* For the poor Esquimaux are so bewitched with the fable of *Torngarsuk*, the evil spirit, and their *Torngaks*, or familiar spirits, that they undertake nothing without consulting them, and are terribly afraid of them. They have among them even women, called *Illiseitsoks*, who pretend to have such a spirit that make a kind of rumbling noise in their bodies, which noise these women afterwards explain, and that is looked upon as a prediction. They are so attached to these old fables and deceits, that it is very difficult to turn them from them. They would gladly keep their *Torngaks*, and at the same time believe in our Saviour. The *Angekoks* observe, that, by the preaching of the gospel, their craft is in danger of being entirely ruined, and therefore use

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all their cunning and influence that the poor Eſquimaux may not become believers.

All this makes the following example, which occurred in the foregoing year, the more remarkable:

A man, whoſe name was *Annauke*, departed this life, calling upon the name of the Lord Jeſus. The Brethren ſaw him the firſt time, four years ago, at Chateau-Bay, when the peace was made by governor Palliſer with the Eſquimaux. He then had all the appearance of a thief and murderer; but in the following years, heard the goſpel frequently, and experienced the power thereof in a remarkable manner, ſo that his features were ſoftened, and from a bear he became a lamb. He pitched his tent in Nain, ſtayed there, in the year 1772, till autumn, and in November removed to his winter-houſe, which was at a conſiderable diſtance from the Brethren. He came ſometime after from thence, and that on foot*, to Nain, merely to hear the goſpel. Towards the end of the year and the beginning of January it is not poſſible, either for the Europeans or Eſquimaux, to paſs or repaſs, as there are then commonly the greateſt falls of ſnow, the ice firſt ſets in, but is not paſſable on the ſea. Therefore the Brethren heard nothing more of *Annauke* till Brother John Schneider viſited the Eſquimaux in their winter-houſes, and *Annauke*'s wife came herſelf in February to the Brethren in Nain.

* This is a ſtrong evidence of his eagerneſs to hear the goſpel, as the Eſquimaux are not accuſtomed to travel on foot; in ſummer they go from iſland to iſland in their kajaks or boats, and in winter on their ſledges.

Then the Brethren heard that *Annauke* fell ſick in December; and it was ſoon evident that his end approached. The Eſquimaux are ſo extremely afraid of death, that they are ſhocked and terrified to hear even the name of a dead perſon mentioned. But *Annauke* turned to our Saviour, and declared that he did not chuſe to ſtay any longer in the world, but would go unto Him. His wife, *Niviarſina*, when ſhe obſerved that his end approached, began, according to the cuſtom of the Eſquimaux, to howl and cry, and aſked him, "O, my dear huſband, wilt thou leave me and "thy two children?" The dying *Annauke* anſwered, "Weep not, I go to the Saviour, who loves mankind "ſo much." This was the more ſtriking, as he had no chriſtian at hand to inſtruct him, nor none near him whom he might be deſirous to pleaſe, by ſpeaking of Jeſus, and expreſſing his reliance upon and love to him. And what was ſtill a more clear proof that this was the effect of a real work of the Holy Ghoſt in his heart, was, that he (as the *Angekok*, who lived in the ſame place, related to Brother Drachart with diſpleaſure) would not have an Angekok to come to him in his ſickneſs, although the Eſquimaux, as ſoon as they fall ſick, ſend directly for the Angekok, who acts the Phyſician, making uſe of certain ſpells over the ſick for their recovery. Yea, *Annauke*, ſince his death, is commonly deſcribed by the Eſquimaux themſelves, as the man whom the Saviour took to himſelf. The Miſſionaries, therefore, by all what they before had ſeen and heard of this man, and by the manner of his departure out of this

this life, can juſtly look upon him as the firſtling* in that country, upon whom our Saviour certainly fulfilled his word, "Him that cometh to me, I will in "no wiſe caſt out."

The above inſtance gave the Brethren more courage to form a claſs of Catechumens of ſome in whoſe hearts there appeared evident traces of the work of the Holy Ghoſt. In this claſs they will be more particularly inſtructed in the ways of God.

The Brethren have alſo reſolved to erect a proper church for the Eſquimaux in which the goſpel may be preached to ſome hundreds at once, as the room in which they have preached in their houſe is much too ſmall.

Certain it is that the Miſſionaries and their Aſſiſtants lead a moſt difficult, inconvenient, and, to fleſh and blood, uncomfortable life in this rough and inhoſpitable climate. The cold is, as has been already mentioned, and as the thermometer proves, much more intenſe than in Greenland. And although they burn in their large ſtoves of caſt iron great quantities of wood, by day and night; yet the windows and walls are all

* The boy Karpik, of whom mention is made, in the *Succinct View of the Miſſions eſtabliſhed among the Heathen by the Church of the Brethren*, page 25 and 26, was certainly the firſtling of this nation. *Annauke* is here mentioned as the firſtling, being the firſt Eſquimaux who departed happily, calling upon the name of the Lord Jeſus in Labrador.

the winter covered with ice, and the bed cloaths freeze to the wall. Rum freezes in the air like water, and rectified ſpirits, in the coldeſt weather, ſoon become thick like oil. The thermometer is commonly from December to April ſeventy degrees below the freezing point. The ſea freezes ſo far out, between the iſlands, that they cannot get a ſight of open water from December to June. Some of the Brethren ventured to go in February to the Eſquimaux about forty miles diſtant from Nain, but they endured the moſt extreme hardſhips from the cold. Though wrapped up in furs, yet their eye lids froze in ſuch a manner together, that they were obliged continually to pull away the ice from them, and to keep their eyes open with their fingers. One of them returned with a pain in his ſide; another with his hand frozen and ſwelled like a bladder; and it was a mercy of the Lord, whom they ſerve, that they were cured. The Eſquimaux, who live chiefly upon blubber, and who have probably fatter and more oily blood, can certainly endure the cold better than the Europeans; but there are however inſtances that the Eſquimaux themſelves are frozen to death in winter. The few ſummer months are, on the other hand, ſo much the hotter, the thermometer riſing to the eighty-ſixth degree: but then they are plagued with an amazing ſwarm of malignant muſketoes, which ſting ſo violently, that they often return home with ſwelled faces.

There can be no expectations of any thing like agriculture, ſo as to produce grain; this is evident from

from the trials already made. Some ſmall gardens which the Brethren have laid out and cultivated, produce ſome ſallad, turnips, hardy cabbages and radiſhes, but potatoes freeze when they have ſhot up no higher than about half a foot.

By hunting and fiſhing they have hitherto been able to procure but very little proviſion, becauſe their ſituation upon the continent is not at all favourable thereto. Beſides, the great number of Eſquimaux dogs, that muſt ſeek their own maintenance, prevent the ſucceſs they might have in catching fiſh, as theſe half-ſtarved dogs, at low water, run into the nets, tear out and devour the fiſh, and morever tear the nets to pieces.

Thus the Brethren muſt be ſupported chiefly by the proviſion ſent to them annually from Europe, ſuch as flour, ſalt meat, rice, peas and barley, and are heartily thankful, partly, that friends are always found who contribute thereunto, and partly that they can earn ſomething by the work of their hands to lighten in ſome meaſure the expence of ſupporting them. They begun laſt year to build boats for the Eſquimaux, and to make ſundry implements for their work, and utenſils for their houſes, and receive in payment whalebone and blubber, which they ſend hither towards their expences.

By the building boats we have reaſon to hope that one great advantage will be obtained, namely, that the Eſquimaux will be delivered from the temptation

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of going to the South to ſteal boats. And by the implements and utenſils made for them by the Brethren, they will be from time to time more enabled to get and increaſe what is neceſſary for their own ſupport.

Though, by theſe means, the outward ſituation of theſe poor ſavages may be greatly improved and rendered more human, yet it is certainly of incomparably greater importance, that they be brought to Jeſus Chriſt by the preaching of the goſpel; that they be ſanctified by the true faith in Him; and thereby, with greater certainty, be civilized and made moral human creatures.

It is this conſideration that enables the Miſſionaries and their aſſiſtants, notwithſtanding their moſt difficult ſituation outwardly, to hold out with chearfulneſs and full of faith, in that call which the Lord has given them, until the Eſquimaux, in this remote part of the earth, ſhall ſee the ſalvation of God. Brother Layritz, on his ſafe arrival here with his wife on the 28th of October, aſſured us, as an eye witneſs, that this was the diſpoſition of thoſe Brethren and Siſters *.

They had this laſt year, by means of the ſloop, an opportunity of viſiting ſix habitations of the Eſquimaux which lie farther North; they were received every where in a friendly and confident manner, and moſt preſſingly entreated by the poor ſavages (many of whom had never ſeen an European before) to come and

* We will juſt mention that another child had been born in this year, and departed this life during Brother Layritz's viſit, and was the firſt corpſe laid in the burying ground there.

dwell

dwell among them, and to bring them the good words of their Creator and Saviour.

Is the acquiring wealth and fortunes, which laſt not for ever, but paſs away, allowed, every where, to be a ſufficient motive for long voyages and the enduring great hardſhips? ſurely it is a more noble motive, yea, it is of infinitely greater uſe, if conſidered merely in a rational point of view, to endure hardſhips, even the greateſt, if ſouls, who are however our fellow creatures, are thereby ſaved from death, brought into a ſtate of peace and happineſs, and obtain a well-grounded hope of a bleſſed immortality. The love of Chriſt, who, though he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, made himſelf of no reputation, took upon him the form of a ſervant, ſubmitted to be deſpiſed and rejected, and became obedient unto death, yea, to the death of the ſhameful croſs, to redeem us, muſt certainly impel the hearts of the Miſſionaries, ſtimulate their zeal, and make them willing to perſevere with patience in the midſt of all, even the greateſt hardſhips.

Bleſſed be the name of the Lord, who has not permitted the labour and trouble of our Brethren among the heathen to be in vain. We have now had many years experience, that our gracious Lord has crowned the ſimple preaching of the goſpel of his incarnation, ſufferings and death, with bleſſing, has owned it in grace, that thereby the eyes of the

heathen

heathen have been opened, and they have been turned from darkneſs to light, and from the power of ſatan to the living God. What the moſt juſt and excellent moral precepts cannot effect, what all the power of philoſphy cannot produce, what all the eloquence and arguments of man cannot accompliſh, that is done by the word of reconciliation through the blood of Chriſt. Of this the heathen, who have received the faith, are a living and inconteſtable proof.

To proſelyte men from one ſuperſtition to another, from one ſpeculative ſyſtem to another, or from one ſect or outward form of worſhip to another, whether by arguments, or outward pomp, or by any other methods, is indeed no buſineſs, for the ſake of which our Miſſionaries would give themſelves ſo much trouble and undergo ſuch difficulties. But to be inſtruments to direct and bring ſouls to Him, in whom the Gentiles ſhall truſt, and to whom every knee ſhall bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, it is well worth while to venture life and limb to effect this. For it is indubitable, that when men, though ever ſo wild and ſavage by nature, are brought to the knowledge of ſalvation in Chriſt Jeſus, by the Holy Ghoſt, they will of courſe become good and uſeful ſubjects, and benevolent fellow citizens of the world.

We, therefore, recommend this miſſion among the Eſquimaux to the prayers and interceſſion of all thoſe who feel the petition in the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom

kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is "in heaven."

Our prayer unto the Lord is, that there may never be wanting willing and faithful labourers among us, who enjoying, in their own hearts, the redemption through the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, having their feet ſhod, are ready to go forth, and to bear the goſpel unto the ends of the earth; and that all thoſe who bear the name of Chriſt, and acknowledge that he alone is their ſalvation, may depart from all iniquity, and with contrite but gladdened hearts, bow their knees and confeſs that Jeſus is the Lord to the glory of God the Father. Amen!

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